

MEMORIAL
OF
HENRY O'REILLY,

PROPOSING

A system of intercommunication by mail and telegraph, along a military road through our own Territories, between the Atlantic and Pacific States, (being the plan approved by the St. Louis national convention, in 1849.)

APRIL 6, 1852.

Referred to the Committee on Territories, and ordered to be printed.

Telegraphic and letter-mail communication with the Pacific—including the protection of emigrants and the formation of settlements along the route, through Nebraska, Deseret, California and Oregon, with branches to New Mexico, &c.—and facilitating the correspondence across the American continent between Europe, China, Hawaii, Australia, the British and Russian dominions on the northern coast, &c.—(A plan approved by the national convention at St. Louis, in 1849.)

1. The extraordinary events connected with the sudden colonization of California having quickened the public mind respecting the plan previously published by the undersigned for extending the telegraph to the Pacific ocean, the attention of the federal government is now again respectfully invited towards the propositions in the memorial which Senator Douglas of Illinois, (chairman of the Committee on Territories,) presented on his behalf at a former session, three years ago.

2. The general character of the lines (about seven thousand miles) of telegraph already constructed under the arrangements of the undersigned, in the first division of the "Atlantic and Pacific telegraph range," eastward of the Mississippi—lines constructed amid difficulties probably unparalleled in the history of any similar enterprise—may indicate to Congress whether the undersigned would now propose any impracticable plan for completing the comparatively short section of two thousand miles, between Missouri and California.

3. The fact that the undersigned solicits neither money nor favor from the federal government, may at least free this memorial from some of the difficulties usually connected with individual applications for governmental attention. The undersigned asks nothing from that government which should not be shared in common with all citizens whose business requires protection of life and property across the public domain. Having been sustained by public confidence, and not by any governmental assistance, from the commencement of telegraphing in America down to the present

period, he prefers to continue that reliance upon his fellow-citizens, individually—being well assured of adequate support in this enterprise from energetic capitalists and business-men—rather than solicit from government any assistance which may not be commonly enjoyed by all persons who embark their lives and property in telegraphic or other enterprises through the public domain between Missouri and California.

4. Annexed is a brief statement of the proposition respectfully submitted now, as at a former session of Congress—a proposition which has met with much public favor wherever it is understood, as shown by the newspapers of Missouri and other States, as well as by the report of the general committee of the St. Louis national telegraph and railroad convention, as shown in the pamphlet, wherein that committee republish the propositions, and expressly declare their hearty approval of the course proposed by the undersigned for extending the telegraph to the Pacific. (A.)

The proposition is substantially to the following effect: That Congress shall pass a law providing that instead of establishing forts, with hundreds of men at long intervals apart, the troops designed for protecting the route shall be distributed in a manner better calculated to promote that and other important objects, on the principal route through the public domain; namely, by stationing parties of twenty dragoons at stockades twenty miles apart, and providing also, that two or three soldiers shall ride daily, each way, from each stockade, so as to transport a daily express letter-mail across the continent; while at the same time protecting and comforting the emigrants and settlers, and thus incidentally furnishing all the protection which the undersigned invokes as a necessary preliminary for completing the comparatively short link of telegraph between Missouri and California—short, comparatively, as contrasted with the seven thousand miles of telegraph constructed under his arrangements in the first division of the Atlantic and Pacific telegraph.

5. The public intelligence, when fully directed to these subjects, will readily perceive the instantaneous and immense influence which such a simple and economical telegraph and letter-mail system across the American continent would effect in revolutionizing the correspondence of the world, as well as in promoting the perpetuity of the Union, and in advancing the settlement and security of vast regions which cannot be settled without some such protection as may thus be afforded by a proper distribution of the troops already employed ostensibly for repelling the Indians along the route to the Pacific.

6. Mature investigation and reflection, after consultation with friends familiar with the plains and mountains, warrant the undersigned in saying that those arrangements, faithfully carried out with military precision by relays from each stockade, would guarantee the transmission of daily letter-mails between Missouri and San Francisco (a distance of about twenty-three hundred miles) with almost equal speed and certainty as the steamer-mails between New York and Liverpool—certainly with greater speed and regularity than the winter mails between New York and the western frontiers of Missouri and Arkansas—incidentally rendering this line one of the best and quickest mail lines in the world, and also the most economical, by causing the mounted soldiery to transport letter-mails without extra expense—while securing amplest supervision of the telegraph, and protecting and encouraging travelling and emigration in the most efficient manner—while colonizing the country along the route, and securing friendship with

the Indians by furnishing market for their game and furs—and while offering inducements for the immediate cultivation of land around the stockades for supplying travellers—making a continuous line of well-organized settlements whereat emigrants and travellers could readily find shelter and sustenance, together with telegraphic and mail facilities for communicating with their distant friends, instead of being debarred from correspondence for months, as at present, while travelling between the Mississippi and the Pacific.

7. While either one of the foregoing considerations is seemingly sufficiently important to justify prompt action on the part of the government, the movement would also be useful as preliminary to the stupendous railroad schemes which are now justly exciting attention among the American people.

8. This project did *not* originate in the excitements connected with the modern Eldorado. It was first submitted to and approved by the western press and people, when the undersigned first extended the telegraph lines to the Mississippi, in the winter of 1847, as shown by the publications of that period. (B.) Before California was ceded by Mexico—before the golden attractions of that region were known—this policy seemed sufficiently important to command attention and approbation in the western States, and wherever else the subject was examined. The language of the St. Louis and other journals, and the adoption and approbation of the proposition by the committee of the great St. Louis convention, show that the value of the enterprise was coolly calculated by gentlemen familiar with the emigration, and with the country between the “old States” and the Pacific coast, and with the vast commerce of that ocean which might seemingly be brought “within hailing distance” of the Atlantic, through the instrumentality of the telegraph. And if the objects were satisfactory to inquiring minds, in the *then* condition of the country, it may well be imagined that the policy is *now* vastly more important, in view of the revolution suddenly effected in the relations between the Atlantic and Pacific coasts, in view of the recent acquisitions of territory, the rapid development of population and wealth, and the extension of governmental institutions along the shores of the Pacific, in Oregon as well as in California, superadded to the increased extent of American and foreign commerce afloat on that ocean; the importance of which considerations is sufficiently indicated by the extraordinary suddenness of establishing State sovereignty (instead of territorial government) on the Pacific slope of the Rocky mountains.

9. The undersigned has already completed far more extensive telegraph lines than he promised at the commencement of the enterprise, those lines extending between the Atlantic, the lakes and the Mississippi, from the British frontier to the Gulf of Mexico—making a total of nearly seven thousand miles, with four thousand more under contract for construction; and the American people can judge whether the person who arranged this extensive system of telegraph lines would be likely to propose any impracticable plans for completing the comparatively short section between the Mississippi and the Pacific.

10. With these remarks, from which the President and the Congress of the United States may judge of the attention bestowed by the undersigned on the subjects to which he now again respectfully invites examination, he submits this memorial, praying, not for money or favor for himself, but merely that the present military force may be so distributed along the line

as to protect all citizens who, like himself, may desire to promote or effect communication through the public domain, from the Missouri frontier, through Nebraska and Deseret, to California and Oregon, in which latter countries he has already contracted with responsible parties for the extension of the telegraph system, in unison with his arrangements on the Atlantic side of the continent.

11. This memorial is published in the newspapers, that the public may understand the precise nature of the plan proposed by the undersigned for completing the telegraphic connection across the American continent, which has met with much favor from various quarters—for the further purpose of answering many inquiries addressed to him from various sections—and for the purpose, also, of enabling those who are interested in the subject, (and who is now without some interest in the matter?) to determine whether any action is necessary on their part to promote the adoption by Congress of some efficient “plan for promoting telegraphic and letter-mail communication with the Pacific—including the protection of emigrants, and the formation of settlements along the route—and facilitating the correspondence across the American continent, between Europe, China, Hawaii, Australia,” &c.

12. With such a system promptly and liberally carried into effect, the undersigned does not hesitate to repeat the prediction, that, within two years at furthest, the European news may be published on the American shores of the Pacific ocean within one week from the sailing of the steamers on the “shortened route” between the old world and the new.

13. This whole subject acquires additional importance from the immense rivalry suddenly aroused respecting the vast regions on the Pacific, between which regions and Europe the telegraph across the American continent will prove inestimably valuable in the transmission of intelligence and the regulation of trade.

The condition of society presents few cases wherein moderate means may be rendered more quickly productive of magnificent results for the welfare of mankind.

HENRY O’RIELLY.

NEW YORK, *December*, 1851.

PROPOSAL FOR EFFECTING THE PROJECT.

1. Influenced by the foregoing and other important considerations connected with the social, commercial, and political interests of the United States, (and who will doubt that such a system is of high import to the happiness and prosperity of our rapidly expanding settlements, and also for the harmonious preservation of our national confederacy.)

2. And encouraged by the general approbation bestowed upon the project wherever it is understood, (and it was understood by those who composed the great national telegraph and railroad committee at St. Louis, in 1849, and by many of the leading journals of the United States, brief extracts of whose expressed opinions are hereto annexed.)

3. The undersigned respectfully invokes the attention of the federal government to the propriety of passing a law, at the earliest practicable period, for accomplishing the objects briefly outlined in this memorial, with the least practicable delay, with a view to arrangements for the coming season on the plains and mountains, which law shall authorize the executive de-

partment of the federal government to designate a suitable route, which shall be declared a "post road," and station the troops in stockades of say twenty dragoons, at distances twenty miles apart; and shall also authorize the formation of a contract with such person or persons as may offer most advantageous terms for the public interest, for the transmission of express letter-mails, deliverable within ten days at each extremity of the route, on the Pacific and on the Mississippi river; having reference in this contract, also, to the employment of the dragoons in carrying the letter mail bags, while patrolling daily between the stockades for the protection of travellers; and having reference, also, in all the arrangements, to the encouragement and protection of a line of electric telegraph, connecting all the stockades along the route, for the transmission of governmental despatches, as well as the despatches required by the social, commercial, and political relations of the people generally throughout the United States. These telegraph and mail arrangements being incidentally calculated to "promote the protection of emigrants, the formation of settlements, and the extension of amicable relations with the Indians, through Nebraska, Deseret, New Mexico, California and Oregon, while facilitating intercourse across the American continent, between Europe and China, Hawaii, Australia, the British and Russian possessions on the north-west coast, and other regions of the Pacific world."

4. If the federal executive shall be promptly authorized by law, (where his general powers are insufficient,) to carry out these suggestions, so as to make immediate arrangements for the enterprise, the memorialist will, if required, construct and organize a line of telegraph, in connection with express letter-mail transportation, as a part of this general plan, before next winter, to the Rocky mountains, to Fort Laramie, if not to Deseret or Utah, if that route shall be selected; or at least to a proportionate extent along a more southerly route towards the Gila valley, including New Mexico—bringing the settlers and soldiery of those regions this year within range of telegraphic and letter-mail communication, while the completion of the whole route to the Pacific can be secured at an early period of the following spring or summer—with less expense than the government is now actually suffering for want of such conveniences of communication. (C.)

5. "With such a system promptly carried into effect," the memorialist repeats that "he does not hesitate to renew the prediction that, within two years at furthest, the European news may be published on the American shores of the Pacific ocean within one week from the sailing of the steamers on the shortened route between the old world and the new;" while the route, once established, will shorten by one-half the time now ordinarily required for letter-mail transportation between the Atlantic and Pacific States, and at the same time serve as a well protected road, which may be emphatically termed the people's highway for the multitudes who are now unable to encounter either the privations of a journey with their families, through the now unguarded and cheerless wilderness between the Mississippi and the Pacific States, or to incur the heavy expense of steam navigation, by the route of Central America, or by the more circuitous way of Cape Horn.

6. It will be seen that this memorialist asks no exclusive favor—no appropriation—no appointment. He asks for nothing which shall not be open to free public competition. If he cannot arrange to accomplish these varied and important objects promptly and economically, and satisfactorily,

(giving ample security for the fulfilment of any contracts, as far as the execution of the objects can be accomplished under contracts,) he will rejoice to see these great measures of national policy completed by others who may be deemed capable of more largely benefiting the public interests, in this important enterprise—an enterprise which, in its manifold and immense influences, may challenge comparison with any system of policy (aside from questions of personal liberty and national independence) now under discussion in this confederacy, or any other nation of the world.

HENRY O'RIELLY.

APPENDIX TO THE "MEMORIAL," &C.

In connection with the foregoing "memorial" and "proposal for effecting the project," the undersigned respectfully submits copies of resolutions which were adopted unanimously by the national railroad and telegraph convention at St. Louis, in 1849, which resolutions will be found in the report published by the general committee of that convention, (quoted at page 17 of the documents accompanying this memorial,) and are as follows:

Resolved, That as an important means, as necessary and preliminary to the construction of such railroad, it is the first duty of the American Congress, immediately on its assembling together, to make provision for the establishment of military posts from the western confines of the western States to the Pacific ocean; that these posts should be established numerous in all proper places not far distant from each other, and that civilized and productive settlements should be encouraged around them by liberal sales and grants of public lands, and by ample protection to the settlers.

Resolved, That the Congress of the United States be memorialized to construct or authorize the construction of a national line of telegraph along the line which may be determined upon, by national authority, for the great railway to the Pacific; said line of telegraph to be constructed in connection with the military posts named in the preceding resolution, and to be pushed to completion as early as practicable.

Attention is also further respectfully invited to the language in which the report of that national convention endorses the plan proposed by this memorialist, which report declares that "the scheme of Mr. O' Rielly is admirably adapted, in every respect in which it can be considered, to the production of beneficial results," the report further adding that "the more we have reflected upon this scheme, the more firmly are we conscious of its feasibility and utility."

This memorialist may be pardoned for quoting, also, the concluding paragraph of the address published by the general committee of the aforesaid national convention, which paragraph is in the following words:

"That the Congress of the United States, to which the following pages have been inscribed by the author, will act with promptitude and efficiency upon the subject, there can be little doubt; and that a system which has been sanctioned and approved with such unexampled unanimity, by those who, from their locality, association, and pursuits, must be the most competent judges, will receive from that body respectful consideration, is surely to be anticipated."

All which, including documents to which reference is made in the memorial, are respectfully submitted.

HENRY O'RIELLY.

A.

ATLANTIC AND PACIFIC TELEGRAPH.

Extracts from the report and resolutions published by the general committee of the national telegraph and railroad convention at St. Louis, 1849, approving O'Rielly's project for intercourse and correspondence across the American Continent.

At an early period during the past spring, the people of St. Louis, profoundly impressed with the importance of opening a commercial communication from the Mississippi to the Pacific, for the double purpose of binding to the Union our colonies on the western coast, and of effecting a radical change in the route of commerce to China and the East Indies, assembled themselves in mass meeting to deliberate upon these important objects. In this matter it was resolved that a *national convention* consisting of delegates from every State and Territory in the Union which might take sufficient interest in the grand object to appoint them, should be invited to assemble in the city of St. Louis, on the 16th day of October, to give expression to the will of the American people. After ample discussion the following resolution, among others, was adopted.

Resolved, That the project of a great line of railway across the American continent, is, in all its aspects, a national project; that as such, it is due to every State and section of the Union that their opinions and views shall be heard, and their interests fairly considered; and that we deprecate any attempt to excite sectional jealousy, party rivalry, or personal feeling in reference to this important subject.

The mayor was then authorized to appoint a general committee of twenty-five citizens to address the people of the United States, and by correspondence and otherwise to secure a full representation in said convention. This committee was appointed accordingly by the mayor, and consisted of the following persons, viz:

L. M. Kennett, Thos. Allen, T. B. Hudson, M. Tarver, Henry Keyser, V. Stanley, A. B. Chambers, R. Phillips, John O'Fallon, Edward Walsh, John F. Darby, J. M. Field, L. V. Bogy, Geo. K. Budd, N. R. Cormany, John Loughborough, Charles G. Ramsay, J. C. Meyer, John Withnell, G. L. Lackland, Thos. T. Gantt, Thos. D. Yeats, Saml. Gaty, O. D. Filley, A. Olshausen.

Acting in strict accordance with this magnanimous resolution, the general committee of twenty-five appointed by the mayor of St. Louis, of which I have the honor to be the chairman, at its first meeting constituted five sub-committees, viz: a committee to frame an address to the people of the United States; a committee of publication; a committee of finance; and a committee to prepare statistics for the use of the contemplated convention.

The committee upon the address were instructed to treat this subject as a great national measure, above all *party* considerations and all personal designs, in the construction of which the whole Union had a deep interest and every section of it a right to have its sentiments considered. The duty imposed upon this committee, of which Thomas Allen, esq., was the chairman, was performed with fidelity and eminent ability. The committee of correspondence received a like instruction. That committee, of which A.

B. Chambers, esq., was the chairman, conformed its action faithfully to the true spirit of the resolution of the people of this city.

Upon the committee of publication the duty was devolved of collecting from every one feeling an interest in the subject essays, and facts illustrative of the great purpose, and giving them to the people. In consequence of the prevalence of that most awful of calamities, the cholera, this committee, of which M. Tarver, esq., was the chairman, found it impracticable to accomplish much in reference to the objects for which it was constituted. The committee of finance, of which John C. Meyer is the chairman, has continued throughout to perform its duty with fidelity. Upon the committee on maps and statistics, of which J. Loughborough, esq., was the chairman, the duty was devolved of collecting and classifying facts and statistics illustrative of the project, together with accurate maps for the use of the convention. This was a most serious labor, and a most responsible duty; but I am gratified to believe that it was performed to the *entire satisfaction of the general committee and of the national convention.*

The first step taken by the committee on statistics was the composition, by its chairman, of the annexed essay upon a Pacific railway, which, after being approved by the committee of publication and the general committee of twenty-five, was inserted in the Western Journal. A large number of extra copies of that valuable periodical were ordered by the general committee for distribution, and we have abundant evidence by letters from all parts of the Union, and through the public press, that its effect upon the public opinion of the country has been eminently beneficial.

Upon the day appointed for the organization of the national convention, the delegates met in the court-house in this city. The Hon. Abner T. Ellis, of Indiana, was unanimously called to preside over the assembly, pending the appointment of its permanent officers. A committee was then appointed to select permanent officers for this convention, and reported the name of the Hon. Stephen A. Douglas, of Illinois, as the president of the convention, with a vice-president from each State represented, and several secretaries, all of which nominations were unanimously concurred in by the convention.

The following States were represented in the convention, viz: Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Pennsylvania, New York, Ohio, Iowa, Wisconsin, Michigan, Virginia, Tennessee, New Jersey, and Louisiana. The whole number of delegates was eight hundred and thirty-five.

* * * * *

[As a pioneer of railroads and settlements, the St. Louis report makes the following statements:]

A TELEGRAPH TO THE PACIFIC.

THE NECESSITY FOR SUCH A LINE.

In the present condition of things, it is almost impossible for the government of the United States to retain in its hands any supervisory control over the affairs of California and Oregon, without subjecting the citizens of those colonies to inconveniences and privations which no liberty-loving people can be expected to bear with for any great length of time. These colonies will, ere long, become States; their manufacturing and commercial power is rapidly on the increase; the capital of a large number of the enterprising cities of the Union is daily seeking investment on the coast of the

Pacific; thousands of young men of intelligence and energy are annually emigrating to those countries, leaving families and friends here; the ships of our merchants are multiplying upon this great ocean; and new, extensive and important commercial relations are opening with the thronging millions of China and the Indies. We have now a considerable military and naval force stationed on the Pacific coast; we are conducting important surveys of coasts and harbors; we shall soon be compelled to establish a system for the government and amelioration of the condition of the numerous Indian tribes, whose very names were, until recently, unknown to the civilized world; a new general survey of more than one hundred thousand square miles of territory, west of the mountains, must be made at an early period, numerous land offices established, and regulations framed for their government; and we shall find it necessary to enter upon a botanical and geological examination of this vast region, for the purpose of tracing the medicinal and useful properties of a new system of vegetable life, and of developing those immense mineral resources which have already excited the enterprise of the whole world. *How can all this be done without a line of telegraph to the Pacific?*

Again: with an energy and industry which have excited the admiration and the astonishment of the whole Union, that peculiar people, the Mormons, have established themselves upon a rich valley, interposed between the stupendous chain of the Timpanogos mountains and the Utah and Salt lakes. There their admirable organization, strict discipline, and general conformity of habits and opinions, have enabled them to accomplish more in four years, than could have been accomplished in fifty by a people analogous in principles and habits to the great mass of the people of the United States; and we are almost constrained to believe that Providence has guided these people into this isolated region for the express purpose of subduing a wilderness which would have appalled any other class of American citizens. Already have these people met in convention and framed a constitution, with the view of applying, at the next session of Congress, for admission into the Union. In a few years more, groups of settlements and civilization will be scattered through the three "Parks," Bear River Valley, the delightful valleys towards the sources of the Missouri and Columbia, and along the western base of the Wahsatch chain, to the valley of the Joaquin; and the State of Deseret will be surrounded by other communities, emulating it in the race of improvement and civilization. If we are to retain political connexion with all these extensive and valuable colonies, how are we to do it, *save by the instrumentality of the telegraph and railway?* It is obviously impracticable; and for these reasons, every public journal, and every public man of respectability in the Union—so far as we have been enabled, after extensive correspondence, to ascertain—is decidedly in favor of taking prompt and efficient measures for the construction of these important works; and the whole people have sanctioned the policy, without a solitary dissenting voice.

A PLAN FOR ITS IMMEDIATE CONSTRUCTION.

For this portion of this article, we are indebted to Henry O'Rielly, esq., who has studied the subject with great care and attention for some years past, and whose eminent practical ability entitles his views to the serious and favorable consideration of the convention and of Congress. We have

only to add, in introducing it, that we have ourselves traversed more than half the distance to the Pacific, and there made extensive collections of facts touching the character of the country, the trade with the Indian tribes, and the characteristics, condition and resources of these tribes ; and that, in our estimation, the scheme proposed by Mr. O'Rielly is admirably adapted, in every aspect in which it can be considered, to the production of beneficial results. This, too, we know to be the opinion of a number of intelligent persons who have been familiar, for many years, with the whole western territory and its contents.

The Congress of the Union have already authorized the construction of a line of posts from our western border to the Pacific, and directed a regiment of dragoons to be so distributed as to furnish a competent garrison to each. Of this contemplated line, two have been already built—one at the mouth of Table creek, near St. Joseph, and the other at Grand Island, in the Platte river ; and two more have been purchased—Fort Laramie, situated on Laramie's fork of the northern fork of Platte river, near the entrance into the Black hills, and Fort Hall, situated on the Lewis fork of the Columbia river. The objects which Congress had in view were to furnish protection and supplies to the emigrants and traders to Oregon and California, and to exercise a salutary restraint upon the Indian tribes. These posts are evidently situated too far apart to accomplish the purposes contemplated ; for it is obvious that emigrating or trading parties if attacked fifty or one hundred miles from either of them, could not obtain relief until it was too late to be of any avail to them. As respects supplies, it is certain that no adequate quantity of them can be collected at these posts, without a very extravagant cost in transportation ; and lastly, no effectual curb can be put upon the Indian tribes, when the soldiery are collected into large parties, at great distances from each other.

Mr. O'Rielly proposes that the Indian title be extinguished to a band of soil—say five miles on each side of the designed line of telegraph and railway—the palisade or brick forts with ample enclosures, shall be erected at distances of thirty miles apart from the western border to the Bay of San Francisco ; that these enclosures shall be large enough to accommodate the garrison and give shelter and protection to parties of one hundred men with their animals and teams ; that thirty dragoons shall be placed in each one of them ; that a telegraph apparatus shall be placed in each ; that a line of wires shall be constructed from the frontier to the bay ; that Congress shall advance for its construction a fair sum, in consideration of which the perpetual use of it shall be secured to the government, or that Congress shall give himself and associates, or other competent parties, the simple right of way, with the protection herein provided, paying for the despatches of the government at a fixed reasonable rate ; that a daily mail shall be carried across the continent by the dragoons, each one being required once in fifteen days to carry the mail-bag, or drive a cart to the centre of the intermediate spaces, there exchange bags, and return ; that donations of land shall be made for a limited period, to such persons, with or without families, as may actually settle upon the belt of land on which the Indian title has been extinguished ; that the supplies of posts, in bread, cattle, and vegetables, shall be purchased of these settlers at a reasonable rate ; that they shall be sworn not to introduce, under any pretence whatever, ardent spirits of any kind into the territories west of the State line, and east of the Sierra Nevada ; that they be authorized to give employment to such

members of the Indian tribes, male and female, as shall evince a disposition to betake themselves to the pursuits of civilized life; and that the commanding officer at each post, alone or with other associates, shall be constituted into a civil and criminal tribunal, to do justice between the settlers, the emigrants, the traders, and the Indian tribes, with the privilege of appeal, in appropriate cases, to one supreme tribunal, to be fixed at some point or other along the line.

The more we have reflected upon this scheme, the more firmly are we convinced of its feasibility and utility. 1. It is of course absolutely necessary that the Indian title should be extinguished along the line of the contemplated telegraph and railway; and, moreover, it will be but an act of justice to compensate those tribes for the direct and fatal injury these works will inflict upon them, by driving out the game—their only present means of subsistence. In this particular they have already seriously suffered in consequence of the extraordinary number of emigrants and traders who have passed through their territory. If this whole system shall be adopted, a portion of this compensation to them should consist of agricultural implements and domestic cattle. 2. The palisades here recommended are of easy and cheap construction. They should be built in imitation of the traders' forts, and of those dotted all over British America by the Hudson's Bay Company. The soldiers themselves can construct them, without any cost whatever to the government. 3. Of course they should be large enough to contain, in case of necessity, from one to two hundred persons. One hundred individuals are as many as can traverse the plains and mountains with any convenience, and parties should be limited to that number by law. Occasional jars with the Indians must, of course, occur. In these cases, a place of security, such as these palisades, may be necessary as a resort for the settlers until peace is restored. 4. Thirty soldiers are ample protection to each other; and assisted by emigrants and settlers, can overcome a war party of six hundred Indians with ease. This number of trappers have been known to take beaver in the Blackfoot country for months together; and this is the fiercest and most implacable tribe between the Mississippi and the Pacific. A party of twenty men has always been considered strong enough in any region south of the valley of the Yellowstone.

5 and 6. With a telegraphic instrument at each of these posts, a break in the wires could be discovered in a very brief space after it occurred, and the re-connection can be made in an hour or two at any time. The posts would generally be secure, for Indians do not *work* to annoy their enemies; and in all our travels we have yet to see a male Indian chop a sapling down four inches through! Besides, there is no better reason for anticipating an injury to a telegraph line than to the forts of the traders; and an injury to the latter has very seldom occurred, although nothing is more common than for a party of a half-dozen white traders to remain at a fort for weeks together, alone, with large supplies of goods, and even alcohol, the Indian's nectar. Indians are like all other people; unless wantonly aggravated into passion, they duly consider their own interests.

7. It would probably be preferable for the government to advance a round sum at once to aid in the construction of this line, instead of paying perpetually, even at half the usual rates, for its despatches. It seems to us that, at very moderate rates, the tax upon the government would be very considerable. However, this is a matter for the deliberate consideration of

Congress. Whoever constructs it would probably prefer that nothing should be advanced, as their profits would be enormously enhanced.

8. This system for carrying the mail across the continent is one which will cost the government nothing. Upon any other plan of carrying the mail, the contractors must be paid a large sum, and the carriers must be furnished with a competent guard. Five thousand dollars per trip for carriers and guards seems to us a moderate estimate for the cost of a mail on the usual system. A semi-weekly mail would cost, at that rate, \$520,000 per annum. With the arrangements herein proposed, *a mail will cost nothing*, and the soldiers themselves will be absolutely benefited by this amount of active service.

9. The system of donating lands, until such time as the line of the telegraph and the contemplated railway shall be sufficiently populated to protect themselves and property; to furnish supplies and relief to emigrants and traders; to furnish the means of subsistence to those who shall construct the railway; and to give to such of the Indians as may seek it, profitable employment, is surely a line of policy recommended as well by its economy as its philanthropy. Already the wretched tribes who wander over our western plains are beginning to suffer in consequence of a deficiency of game. That deficiency has been brought about by our own policy. The marching of troops to Santa Fe, during the war with Mexico, and the enormous amount of emigration since, have almost driven the buffalo entirely away from their original haunts; and all the tribes whose hunting grounds lie south of the latitude of forty-two degrees, are absolutely in danger of outright starvation. Hence the ferocity of these tribes at the present time, and their constant attempts to murder and rob travelling parties. We say that the conduct of these Indians is rational and justifiable; and that it is not only their right, but it is the solemn duty of the government of the United States to make judicious and permanent provisions for their sustenance, and their advancement in the domestic and useful arts, in morals and in religion. The system which is herein recommended has been acted upon by the Catholic missionaries from the beginning—has been practiced by the Hudson's Bay Company for the past two centuries—and has been adopted, for many years past, in different portions of Mexico and in California; *and it has uniformly operated beneficially to the Indians themselves, and profitably for the whites*. Not the least of the advantages of this system is the protection and encouragement it will afford to those pious missionaries who, with a zeal and perseverance worthy of all praise, have for years past labored for the improvement and conversion of these unfortunate people; but whose labors have effected so little, in consequence of the deficiency of the means of furnishing the Indians profitable occupation, and the inadequate protection afforded them by the government. The Indian race is evidently destined to extinction. This is the natural result of the contract between civilized and savage people. But we may ameliorate their condition; we may provide a system for their comfortable maintenance; we may cultivate their moral and intellectual faculties; and we may contribute, in a number of ways, to their peace and happiness here, and their hopes hereafter.

COST OF A LINE TO SAN FRANCISCO.

[Estimated by the St. Louis committee.]

The distance from St. Louis to the mouth of the Kansas, or to Fort Leavenworth—crossing the river, so as to furnish facilities to the valley of the Missouri—would be about 438 miles; from Fort Leavenworth to the South Pass, 900 miles; and, from the South Pass to the bay, 1036 miles—making a total distance of 2374 miles. At the rate of \$150 per mile, the whole cost of a line from St. Louis to the bay will be \$356,100; but as a battery and instruments must be furnished to about eighty officers upon the line, and, as there is a portion of the route bare of timber, a fair estimate will probably swell this sum to \$400,000.

A branch line would, of course, be needed at an early day to Santa Fe, to the new Mormon State of Deseret, and to Oregon. The shortest line for a branch to Santa Fe will be from Fort Laramie, on the north fork of Platte river, 550 miles. This will cost about \$90,000. To the new Mormon State, the branch line must be taken from the Soda Springs, in the northern bend of Bear river, a distance of about 300 miles. This will cost about \$50,000. The shortest branch line to Oregon, will be from the northern bend of Humboldt river, to the mouth of the Willamette—425 miles. This will cost about \$68,000. The total cost of the whole system proposed, for the present and in the future, \$608,000.

REASONS WHY THESE LINES SHOULD YIELD FULL DIVIDENDS.

1. We have now in the Pacific upwards of three hundred and fifty whaling ships, the owners of which are compelled to communicate with them by letter around Cape Horn, or across the Isthmus of Panama. Other productive sources of trade are rapidly opening upon that great ocean, which must furnish employment to a large number of other vessels, both with steam and sails. Their present communications are delayed from one to six months. It is therefore certain that these parties will find it their interest to use the telegraph.

2. There are, at this time, more than seventy thousand citizens of the United States in California, and their number is so rapidly augmenting, that if Congress shall authorize the *extension of the telegraph at its next session*, its completion in fifteen months will probably find a population there of one hundred and twenty-five thousand persons. Nearly all of these individuals are connected as partners or employees of capitalists in the United States, who are constantly in need of information, to enable them to ship to that country supplies of goods, mining implements, &c. All of them, too, have left near connections by blood in the United States. Is it credible, that all the parties thus interested will await the tardy movements of a mail across the Isthmus, when the telegraph affords the means of instant communication? Certainly not.

3. The population of Oregon is upwards of twenty-five thousand persons. They, too, have left in the Union relatives and partners in business, who are anxious to communicate with them with celerity and certainty.

4. The new Mormon community, in the vicinity of the Great Salt Lake, numbers at this time over sixty thousand individuals, and this population is augmenting at an unprecedented rate. Their business and other connections

in the Union and on the Pacific, will render the telegraph a thing of necessity to them.

5. The line will pass by some of the posts of the fur traders. This trade now amounts to \$300,000 per annum, and large sums are expended by the traders in sending expresses to St. Louis every season. Of course, they will avail themselves of the telegraph to dispense with the expresses.

6. The trade to Santa Fe and New Mexico is at this time estimated at about \$1,000,000, and this trade is rapidly on the increase. The necessities of business will compel the use of the telegraph in that direction.

7. The border trade with the Indians is now very considerable, we all know; but we have not been enabled to collect sufficient data upon which to make an accurate estimate of it. The telegraph will be needed in this trade.

8. Twenty years will not elapse—perhaps not three—before a new territory will be organized between our western border and the Rocky mountains. The proposition to do this has been already introduced into Congress, upwards of five years ago. When this is done a pastoral population will fill that vast region, and they will need the telegraph.

9. Other settlements will be immediately formed in the Bear River valley, the Three Parks, at Pierre's Hole, Jackson's Hole, and in numbers of the rich valleys scattered along the vicinity of the line to the bay, and they will need the telegraph.

10. A large naval force must in future be kept up on our Pacific shores, to protect the commerce of California and Oregon; a considerable military force must be stationed in California, Oregon, New Mexico, Deseret, and along the line of travel from the frontier to the Pacific; and an increase in the military force in the present western territory is inevitable. To communicate with all these, a telegraph is indispensable. A single overland despatch of the government will cost about \$15,000. When it is considered how many of these must be sent in the course of a year to the various points mentioned, there can be little or no doubt that the expense of sending these communications for a single year, will exceed the actual cost of a telegraphic line.

11. The introduction of white settlements into the western territory, and into Oregon and California, will render a new and enlarged system of Indian intercourse absolutely necessary; and to regulate this intercourse, numerous agents must be scattered through those regions. Is it not obvious that in the delicate relations which will exist in respect to so many tribes, the instant communication by telegraph is indispensable; otherwise wars and bloodshed may be carried on for months together before the central authority can receive information of the fact, and send military force to quell the disturbances.

12. The lands, including about 600,000 square miles, east and west of the mountains, must be surveyed ere settlements of any size are permitted to be formed upon them; and topographical, geological, and other scientific expeditions will have soon to be made. All these services will require a large body of government agents, with whom frequent and prompt communication will be a thing of necessity.

For all these reasons we are constrained to believe it is the duty, as we have no doubt it will be the pleasure of the next Congress of the Union, to authorize the extension of a telegraph line to the Pacific. For the present, a single line to the bay may possibly suffice; but we incline to the

belief that it will be decidedly preferable to complete the whole of the branches enumerated, as soon as the direct line shall be perfected.

PROBABLE PROFITS OF A LINE FROM THE MISSISSIPPI TO THE PACIFIC.

We will speak first, of the direct line from St. Louis to the Bay of San Francisco, and then of the branches herein proposed.

The despatches of the government to the military and naval forces stationed in California, together with its communications with the local government there, the Indian agents, the land officers, the custom-house officers, the postmasters and mail carriers, and the topographical and scientific parties engaged in the survey of the country and the adjacent coast, are very difficult of calculation. We will, however, make an estimate, which we think will be admitted by all to be within bounds:

1. Suppose the government sends a single despatch per month to our naval force on that coast, containing thirty words. This, at the rate of charge usual on telegraphic lines, would amount, per annum, to \$93 60. If a single answer, containing thirty words, is received by the government, this will be, in one year, \$93 60 more.

Suppose these despatches and answers contain sixty words, the cost will be..	\$374 00
Suppose there are two despatches and answers of sixty words per month....	748 00
Suppose there are four despatches and answers of sixty words per month....	1,496 00
Suppose there are eight despatches and answers of sixty words per month...	2,992 00

That this amount of matter will be sent to the naval force alone, can scarce be doubted; and, indeed, we think the reports—if to be had—will show not only this number of words, in a year, but *twenty times* as many.

2. Let precisely the same calculation be made for the despatches sent to and from the military forces in California, and the amount will be.....	2,992 00
3. The same calculation as respects the Indian agents will yield.....	2,992 00
4. The same as respects the land officers will yield.....	2,992 00
5. The same as respects the post office will yield	2,992 00
6. The same as respects the local government of California will yield	2,992 00
7. The same as respects the custom-house will yield	2,992 00
8. The same as respects the surveyor of public lands.....	2,992 00
9. The same as respects scientific surveying parties	2,992 00

Total.....	26,928 00
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Double the number of these despatches and the amount of words in them will yield.....	52,856 00
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1. There are in the Pacific upwards of 350 whaling vessels. Suppose the owners send one despatch per month, and receive one answer, containing thirty words, or fewer despatches with more words, the amount will be..	187 20
2. Double this number, and the amount will be	374 40
3. Treble it and the amount will be	561 60
4. Quadruple it, and the amount will be	648 80

And this last number is a very low estimate to make of profits from this branch of business.

From the 70,000 men in California, suppose that a single despatch of ten words from each man shall be sent to the Union in one year, and a single answer of ten words given, the amount will be \$364,000.

It may be that not more than half the people there might use the telegraph; but the cost of a single despatch of ten words is only \$2 60, and certainly those who do use it—including merchants and mining companies—will send the number of messages here calculated.

5. Double this number of words, either by the quantity or number of despatches, and the amount will be \$728,000.

1. Suppose those engaged in the border trade with the Indians shall send one despatch of ten words per month, and receive as many, this will yield...	\$13 20
2. Double this number of messages	26 40
3. Treble them	39 60
4. Quadruple them.....	52 80

1. The several companies of fur traders certainly send as many as five messages of thirty words per month, and receive answers. This would yield	264 00
2. Double this number of despatches.....	528 00
3. Quadruple them.....	1,056 00

1. The new territory in contemplation between the frontier and the Rocky Mountains, will very soon contain 20,000 inhabitants, if this telegraph and railway is constructed. Suppose one in five hundred of these people send a single message in two months, and receive answers, containing thirty words, the amount will be..... \$26 40
 2. Double them..... 52 80
 3. In this territory, the government must have a military force of several regiments. Suppose two despatches of thirty words are sent to them per month, and two answers received. This will be 158 40
 4. Double them..... 316 80
 5. Quadruple them..... 633 60
 6. This territory must be surveyed and sectionized. If a like number of despatches be sent to and received from the surveyors, this will yield..... 633 60
 7. A number of other Indian agents must be placed in this territory. At the same rate this will yield..... 633 60
 8. The despatches sent to and from the local government of this territory will, at the same rate, amount to 633 60
- These calculations are evidently far below the mark; for the despatches now sent to this city to be mailed for Fort Leavenworth, cost several thousand dollars.
9. In addition to all these sources of profit on the Mississippi and Pacific line, we must estimate the business on the first section of it, already alluded to, between St. Louis and Fort Leavenworth; and this will yield, there can be no doubt, ten per cent. upon the cost of that section. Say..... 5,000 00

BRANCH LINE TO SANTA FE.

- The branch line from Fort Laramie to Santa Fe will cost 90,000 00
1. If the government sends one despatch per month to Santa Fe, to the military force, and receives an answer of thirty words, it will amount to... 98 00
 2. Double these despatches, or the amount of their contents..... 196 00
 3. Quadruple them..... 392 00
 4. The same as respects Indian agents..... 392 00
 5. " " land offices..... 392 00
 6. " " post office..... 392 00
 7. " " the local government..... 392 00
 8. " " the custom houses..... 392 00
 9. " " surveyors..... 392 00
 10. " " scientific surveying parties..... 392 00
-
- Total..... 3,136 00
11. Double the number of these despatches..... 6,272 00
 12. The present trade with New Mexico amounts to \$1,000,000. Certainly such a trade will yield to the line a revenue of..... 10,000 00

BRANCH LINE TO THE STATE OF DESERET.

- This line will cost the sum of..... 50,000 00
1. Here, too, the government must have full as much intercourse with the military, Indian agents, surveyors, &c., as with California and New Mexico. This will yield, for one despatch per month, and answers to them, the round sum of about 5,000 00
 2. Double the number of despatches 10,000 00
 3. Quadruple them..... 20,000 00
 4. With a present population of over 70,000 persons, the commercial necessities of the State will yield, say 6,000 00

BRANCH TO OREGON.

- This line will cost..... 60,000 00
1. The government despatches here, too, will yield, if sent to the military and naval forces, the government surveyors, agents, custom house, &c., once per month..... 10,000 00
 2. Double them..... 20,000 00
 3. Quadruple them..... 40,000 00
 4. The commercial and private necessities will yield, say 10,000 00

We have furnished the complete data from which the reader can make his own estimate respecting the probable profits of these lines. Of course it

is impossible for us to know what number of despatches will be sent along these lines by the government and private individuals. Each reader, however, can estimate that for himself, and come to his own conclusion from the data we have furnished. The calculations are made from the usual rates of charge on telegraph lines, and moreover these rates are very cheap.

The *influence of the electric telegraph upon the progress of civilization*, is a theme upon which we should delight to dilate, if we could do so within the space which we have limited ourselves to in the preparation of this article; but we are reluctantly compelled to forego that pleasure until a future occasion shall be offered.

In conclusion, we shall only add, that the rapid interchange of thought in an extended empire like ours, gives the same compactness and homogeneity to our social and political systems which result in communities confined to a smaller space; that intellectual activity and moral power are rapidly augmented by it; that every department of science and knowledge receives from it a decisive impulse; and that it constantly and steadily tends to that uniformity of manners, habits, opinions and sentiments which are essential to the suppression of wars and divisions, and to the permanent peace and security of the world. With an electric telegraph penetrating into all our populated and business districts, frauds in trade will be suppressed—equality will be produced between those who contract—exchanges will be indefinitely multiplied—industry and the arts stimulated—crime comparatively suppressed—agriculture and commerce improved—and all those conditions which are essential to the security and prosperity of a well-ordered society produced. With a lightning communication across the continent, the hourly interchange of sentiments and opinions with our brethren upon the Pacific coast, will keep alive in their hearts and minds the remembrance of the happy homes of their youth, and of the great and glorious system of polity under which they grew up to be free American citizens; the new relations which they are forming with strange people will not obliterate the manly characteristics of the republican character; they will never entertain the idea of separate political existence; and they will prove to be efficient pioneers in that great system of liberty and civilization which Divine Providence has so distinctly marked out as the mission of the people of the United States.

* * * * *

We are gratified to learn that Mr. O'Rielly, animated by that indefatigable energy, decision, and perseverance which have established for him an enviable reputation for usefulness and public spirit, is determined to build this telegraph section—the first span in the magnificent design which he has labored for years to accomplish—a line of lightning to the Pacific; and if the Congress of the Union shall respond to the universal public sentiment of the country, this splendid work—the pioneer of the railway—will be consummated within eighteen months to come. When this is done, the line from St. Louis to the bay of San Francisco will be the most profitable line upon the continent, and the best stock in the civilized world.

* * * * *

At a subsequent stage of the proceedings the following resolutions were severally moved and adopted:

By the Honorable Samuel Treat: *Resolved*, That as an important means, as necessary and preliminary to the construction of such railroad, it is the first duty of the American Congress, immediately on its assembling together,
Mis.—2

to make provision for the establishment of military posts from the western confines of the Western States, to the Pacific ocean; that these posts should be established numerously in all proper places not far distant from each other; and that civilized and productive settlements should be encouraged around them by liberal sales and grants of public lands, and by ample protection to the settlers.

Resolved, That the Congress of the United States be memorialized to construct or authorize the construction of *a national line of telegraph* along the line which may be determined upon by national authority for the great railway to the Pacific. Said line of telegraph to be constructed in connexion with the military posts named in the preceding resolution, and to be pushed to completion as early as practicable.

* * * * *

That the Congress of the United States, to which the following pages have been inscribed by the author, will act with promptitude and efficiency upon the subject, there can be little doubt; *and that a system* which has been sanctioned and approved* with such unexampled unanimity by those who, from their *locality, association and pursuits*, must be the most *competent judges*, will receive from that body respectful consideration, is surely to be anticipated.

L. M. KENETT,

Chairman of the Committee of Twenty-five.

ST. LOUIS, November 25, 1849.

Note upon the foregoing estimates of cost and business.

The foregoing is copied from the report published by the St. Louis "Committee of Twenty-five," as prepared by John Loughborough, esq., of the Missouri bar, and is embodied in the voluminous document published by that committee, chiefly between pages 61 and 74; showing the objects and opinions of the "National Telegraph and Railroad Convention" at St. Louis in 1849.

The rapidly increasing value of the multitudinous interests clustering around the American and Asiatic coasts and among the islands of the Pacific ocean—interests rapidly increased beyond all anticipation since the foregoing estimates were made in 1849—must satisfy readers generally that the amount of *telegraph business*, on the proposed line to the Pacific, will greatly exceed these estimates:

While on the other hand, the *construction and organization* of a telegraph line across the continent, with the degree of solidity and excellence which should characterize a work of such immense importance to the United States and to the world at large, would doubtless cost more than is estimated for ordinary lines through well-settled regions:

But the *more perfect and reliable the line*, THE GREATER WOULD BE THE AMOUNT OF BUSINESS; and no investment would pay better than the additional sum required to render the line as permanent and accurate as human skill and energy can render it.

H. O'R.

* Referring to railroads as well as telegraphs.

B.

Some extracts from prominent western journals of 1847-8-9-50-51, &c., respecting O'Rielly's plan for communication across the American continent.

MR. O'RIELLY'S PROJECT FOR A TELEGRAPH TO THE PACIFIC.

Mr. O'Rielly re-publishes the subjoined memorial to the Congress of the United States in the St. Louis papers. Mr. O'Rielly can accomplish whatever is possible, and no man is a better judge of what is possible.—*Louisville (Ky.) Journal*.

We think that the present is a fitting moment to make a suggestion, which, but a year since, might have been considered wild, but which the extraordinary march of events—above all, the arrival of Mr. O'Rielly with his wires on the banks of the Mississippi—now may recommend to the attention of thinking minds. We would suggest that the only natural termination of the telegraph line west, should be the mouth of the Columbia river, and that it ought to be extended by government thus far without delay, inasmuch as that the value of its services would be incalculable; that its expenses in round figures would be but say \$600,000; and that it could actually be put in operation in six months! Is this last statement too wild either, when we reflect that the energy and systematized method of O'Rielly has put in construction seventeen hundred miles of telegraph since last June, in spite of persecutions and annoyances which could not attend this further enterprise? Are there natural obstacles to be overcome? We would simply say that O'Rielly set his line in operation over the Alleghenies in the depth of winter; further, that in the Pacific enterprise it might be done before winter. Send an early corps of men forward to commence eastward, from the South Pacific, and by the time they reached Wallamette, the corps from Independence should have linked wires with them at their starting point in the mountains. We only are showing that, judging from what has already been achieved, the work could be done in the time named. Further, if it were placed in Mr. O'Rielly's hands, we feel that the work would be done; however, give a year to it, if necessary. The transportation of material might be somewhat more expensive, but the difference would be no serious consideration. Following the river valleys, there would be no scarcity of timber; and say that Indians interrupt the connection twice, thrice, or a dozen times, the inconvenience would be trivial, comparatively; the same with storms. We have mounted companies on the plains, &c., and how better could they be employed than in protecting the wires, especially as doing so they would save themselves, mainly, from harsher labor among the tribes?

But should government apathetically decline this enterprise, would it not *pay*—that's the word—would it not *pay*, even should the work be confined to the merchants of Boston and New York? These cities have immense interests at stake in the Pacific. China merchants, oil merchants, ship owners generally; the traders to the islands, Oregon, California, &c.; would not a line of telegraph to the mouth of the Columbia be of the highest importance to them? especially as packets, even now, are making the Columbia a centre, while this project would at once connect itself with steam associations, bringing the whole Pacific shores within twenty days?

reach of our Atlantic cities—Whitney's enterprise, in part, accomplished—and all at the expense of \$600,000.

Looking at what has been done, we regard the feasibility and utility of this plan as already demonstrated. For the present, it might rest here, but would it continue to do so? Would not the next dash be to connect the Wallamette and Sacramento valleys? Would not San Francisco, Monterey, Los Angeles, San Diego, soon be linked, and the returning line be found, on its way from this last point, flashing up the Gila valley, once more crossing the mountains, striking the Del Norte below Santa Fe, and eventually completing the grand circle by linking itself, at the capital of New Mexico, with that earlier line which should already have connected New Mexico with Missouri? This is certainly extensive; but in support of it we repeat, O'Reilly has erected seventeen hundred miles of telegraph since last June!—*St. Louis Reveille*, Dec. 17, 1847.

TELEGRAPH WESTWARD.

Whilst government is arranging steamers for rapid communication with our distant citizens, it seems to be proper enough that Mr. O'Reilly should be invited to completely annihilate time and distance, so that the Oregonians may feel the common impulse of their brethren on this side of the Rocky mountains. The project does not appear so visionary as did two years ago the proposition to connect the Atlantic, the lakes, and the Mississippi. Its immense importance to the government may be readily appreciated; but it should also be borne in mind that our Pacific commerce is not only of immense value at this time, but is augmenting with great rapidity. The Boston and New York merchants would gladly avail themselves of such means of hearing from their ships on far-off voyages, and New Bedford would thus hold frequent chats with her whalers. Lightning has now become a necessary attendant on commerce, and it should traverse our continent on errands of love, profit, and patriotism.

The fears which once agitated statesmen, as to the perpetuity of our republic should its boundaries be enlarged, are now mostly dispelled by the triumphs of art. Although our national domain now stretches to the Pacific on the west and the Rio Grande on the south, it is not more difficult of access, nor the Territories and States further apart, for all practical purposes, than in 1789, when nearly the whole American population was along the eastern slope of the Alleghenies. The fears of many eastern statesmen at that day, led them to oppose every movement tending to open the Mississippi valley to civilization; and during Washington's administration, the hostility was carried so far that a public meeting was held by the Kentucky pioneers to adopt measures for their protection. That great western demonstration induced Washington to write a letter to the principal persons connected with it, disclosing the then condition of negotiations, and assuring them that the government would not abandon the right to the free navigation of the Mississippi. Still the apprehension of the eastern statesmen continued; and when Mr. Jefferson concluded the treaty of 1803, by which Louisiana was acquired, a bare constitutional majority ratified the act. At length *steam* gave new impulse to western prosperity, and brought the remote settlements of this valley into intimate intercourse with each other

and with the east. Hardly had the distance from Fort Leavenworth, New Orleans, and Chicago, to New York and Boston, been practically reduced to a few days' journey, before lightning came as the harbinger of newer and closer connection. The "winged thoughts" of the poets were no longer the mere fancies of bards, but sober realities. The most distant regions of our republic were made neighbors, and those thousands of miles distant could hold familiar converse with each other. This last great achievement should remove all doubts as to the safe extension of our national boundaries.

It is now universally admitted that a new State is soon to exist in Oregon, and generally confessed that California must be permanently ours. The government, in view of these important facts, has employed steam as an agent of its will in binding these remote regions closely to the republic, and giving them rapid and easy intercourse with the older States of the confederacy. Next year steam vessels will bring New York within six or eight weeks communication with the mouth of the Columbia—a shorter voyage than between Boston and Savannah in 1780. A telegraph line in continuation of that now constructed to St. Louis, would completely annihilate the distance, and the government at Washington be in instant receipt of news from our Pacific coast. The line should precede the contemplated railroad, and can be finished in one or two years. It must necessarily be a government enterprise, and would give to our country early and firm hold on the rising commerce of the Pacific. It is the duty of those entrusted with public affairs to take a far-sighted view of the mission and future destiny of the United States. In the progress of events, if we are not blind to our power, this land may rival in greatness and prosperity—nay, surpass—all that the world has yet seen. Those who urged the settlement of Oregon, and gave impetus to the wave of emigration thitherward, understood well the mighty results of which such events would be the precursor. The exploration of Lewis and Clarke, under Mr. Jefferson, and the later labors of Fremont, have all heralded the same consummation. The persevering efforts of Benton and Linn to open Oregon to civilization, the early writings of the former when a St. Louis editor, and his subsequent exertions in the Senate, as well as the unremitting enthusiasm of the latter, have yet to be viewed in the light of impartial history and of true philosophy. The historian of this republic will, in the next century, look back upon those early and discouraged efforts as the beginning of an order of events which will then be realized in the existence of new States on the Pacific, of an unrivalled commerce with India and the Pacific isles, and of immediate communication between all parts of this extended confederacy. The statesmen of the west have gone hand in hand with the improvements of science and art, and scarcely have they pointed the way to new and glorious events, before steam and lightning have appeared to render bright and easy the road marked out by their wisdom.

It is in this broad view of the future, as it is now opening to our republic, that we speak of extending the telegraph to the Pacific coast. The "times and the man" have already come for the fulfilment of so vast a design. O'Rielly has brought the lightning to the old frontiers of the Union—let him carry it forward to the Pacific ocean.—*St. Louis Daily Union*, Dec. 28, 1847.

Since mention has been made of continuing the telegraph from this point to the Pacific, we have heard many objections urged against its possibility, but none, we think, which presents a serious obstacle, where determination and energy attempt the accomplishment of the object. "It would be impossible to obtain timber," says one. Follow Fremont in his explorations on the Oregon route, and see how clearly *possible* it is to obtain *plenty* of timber over the whole way, and that of the best character, at a comparatively short distance from the direct line of travel at any point.

"The trees would fall on the wire and break the connection; at such distance from posts, too, that it would be impossible to keep it continually clear."

Here is another objection, which may be urged against every mile of telegraph already constructed; yet the agents contrive, with very little difficulty, to keep the connection open from New York to St. Louis, and much of this route is through heavy timber. Our mounted men, connected with the Oregon posts along the route, might easily keep the wire clear of obstructions, and at the same time perform the duty of protecting emigrants and traders from the Indians.

"Ah, well," says a third, triumphantly, "if the posts escape the prairie fires, the Indians will be sure to destroy them for the purpose of obtaining the wire."

This prairie fire, which is so confidently advanced as an insurmountable obstacle, occurs but once a year, and then is so rapid in its course that a single isolated post is in very little danger of destruction from its force; the outer surface may be burned, or slightly charred, but the flame never lingers long enough in one spot to totally destroy it. As for the Indians, a few lessons in the way of punishment would check their depredations upon the line. The wire found in their possession would always be an evidence against them, and one which they could not use without discovery; for it is not a commodity which Indian traders carry into the country.

The common exclamation against the project is, that it is *visionary*. This word is often advanced as an argument against any scheme of magnitude, and frequently men of sense, as well as the ignorant, indulge in the expression, without taking trouble to examine whether it really is what the pronounce it. We need not go further for an illustration of this fact than the triumphant progress of the telegraph to this city. The conveying intelligence to any great distance was at first pronounced *visionary*; but this great means of communication has demonstrated its power by its action, and minds unable at first to comprehend it, have been so far enlightened, by proof of its capacity, as to yield an acknowledgement that, though to *them* at first a vision, yet to the discoverer and to scientific minds who comprehend the subject, a magnetic telegraph was a *reality*. Henry O'Rielly, esq., has clearly demonstrated that it may be successfully carried clear across the continent of America; and the best evidence of the possibility is the fact that at this moment the shore of the Mississippi is in telegraphic communication with the Atlantic. The untiring energy of an individual, in the face of human opposition as well as natural obstacles, has extended the telegraph, since last June, over a distance of *seventeen hundred miles*. A great portion of these lines, both between this point and Cincinnati, and

around the northern lakes, runs through almost as wild a country as the territory lying between this point and the Rocky mountains.

Mr. O'Rielly, on his route to the Pacific, would find no difficulty comparable with the crossing of the Mississippi. We repeat, the enterprise is called for, is practicable, is politic, is economical; that \$600,000 will accomplish it; that it can be done during *one summer*; and that the talk about Indians, &c., is the only *dreamy* part of the matter. The savages of the plain will play fewer tricks with the telegraph than have been already practiced by the civilized speculators of the seaboard.—*St. Louis Reveille, December 23, 1847.*

OREGON TELEGRAPH.

The "*Union*," of this city, the other day, embraced the project warmly and eloquently, regarding the question as only one of *time*. We have shown that the work, once properly put in hand, can be done in one summer as well or better than in two; and the question of time, therefore, can only be as to when the work shall be commenced. It is hoped that the government, in view of the immense interests at stake upon the Pacific, will, by next spring, authorize the immediate prosecution of the work; but should the enterprise be declined or deferred, as we said in our first article on the subject, it will be no harm to examine how far it might be made to *pay* as a private project.

If our memory serves us, we have, of whalemens, merchantmen, men-of-war, coasting and trading vessels, about five hundred in the Pacific; few of which but would, during the year—if not from the mouth of the Columbia, from the Sandwich group, or other points in communication with the mouth of the Columbia—have deeply important occasion for corresponding with their principals along our Atlantic coast. In addition to the mercantile and government despatches—the latter, how frequent and grave in their importance!—how many, many times would love and friendship and mere amusement avail themselves of the electric medium? Would not the fleets in the Pacific, of *all nations*, avail themselves of the wires in corresponding with Europe? To leave the bosom of the ocean, how many messages of trade and kindness would there be exchanged between the Oregon settlers and our western States! Steam connection between Oregon and California!—and what pride and pleasure would not the unseen thrill of the wire convey to and from the Californians also! Would the *Hudson's Bay Company* be insensible of the value of this mode of communicating with Canada? Would not all their vast home transactions be conducted, in their own cypher, along this new convenience? There is steam between Vancouver and *Sitka*, the chief factory of the Russians on the southwest coast. When we consider that from this point is kept up a regular communication with the imperial government, and that to do this they have to encounter the perils of the extreme north Pacific, and then landing at Ochotsk, travel over land *seven thousand miles*, when we consider this, does it appear improbable that even these despatches would find their way along the wire to Boston, thence to be forwarded, through the Russian consul, by steam to Europe? Coming nearer home, how many messages would be received in this city during the year from Fort Lara-

mie, that centre of the mountain trading and trapping interests? How many messages would be sent back, from certain points, by emigrants and travellers along the route? All this may be considered *idle* by many, but at any rate there can be "no offence" in it. We think that we have demonstrated the *chance* for the original one thousand messages each way, and also the chances for *as many thousand more* as would cover the expenses of operating, fixtures, repairs, right of patent, &c., &c. We are not now discussing the protection of the line from Indians and what not; but we have a regiment of mounted rifles, originally designed for similar service, and it cannot be long before they may be employed as was at first intended.—*St. Louis Reveille, January 1, 1848.*

COMMUNICATION WITH THE PACIFIC.

The discovery of the gold mines in California, and the large influx of population there, consequent upon that discovery, have aroused public attention to the importance of speedy communication between our Pacific territories and other portions of the confederacy.

Railroad and telegraphic communication with the Pacific, transcends in importance all other questions now before the country, and ought to be discussed in every possible form, so that public opinion may be fully matured and without unnecessary delay. That feature of Col. Benton's plan which includes the electric telegraph, must not be overlooked. The instant transmission of thought from us to our California brethren, and back from them to us, is an essential element of that great system of works which is to bind together, indissolubly, the various parts of our vast confederacy. With the energy of such a man as Mr. O'Rielly, the telegraphic part of the enterprise can be accomplished within two years, and so managed as to carry with it the other public conveniences of great "pith and moment."

The thousands who are now hurrying to our Pacific domain, with earnest thoughts and fond affections for the home they leave behind, can desire no greater boon than that the republic should furnish them with the means of an instant interchange of sentiment and information with their friends and kindred in the States. On the Atlantic coast are now, and for years will be the maritime enterprise and capital by means of which this nation is to control the commerce of the Pacific. How important, then, that the Atlantic merchant should be placed in instant communication with his factors in California and Oregon, and with his sailors and ships on that distant coast. How necessary, too, for the government to learn promptly what is occurring in so remote a territory, whither are thronging thousands from all portions of the world.

This scheme is a glorious one—and yet how like a fairy tale! When Col. Benton suggested, thirty years ago, that the future route of Asiatic commerce would be across the American continent, his essays fell on listless ears. No one caught up those early hints, or urged them on the public mind. They seemed the day-dream of overwrought imagination, beautiful in fancy, but alas! without feasibility or substance. Now, steam and electricity have solved the problem beyond a lingering cavil. That vast conception is soon to be realized, the continent to be spanned, the wealth of the Indies to be poured through the gorges of the Rocky mountains, and down their vast eastern slope to the Mississippi river. Aye, more! a few days will suffice for a journey to San Francisco, and a few minutes for

intelligent converse with the inhabitants of that remote region. Our destiny as a nation is almost incomprehensible.

By the obstinacy of a neighboring power, California has been forced into our possession, as if to put within our reach and under our control those great influences which are to determine the future commerce of two continents, and the civilization of Asia. After the lapse of many thousand years, civilization, in its continued journey to the westward, marching onward with increasing power and vitality, has began to look from the shores of America across the vast deep to the coast of China, the seat of the most ancient yet lifeless form of religion and intellectual culture. The cycle is entirely completed. The ancient and the modern, the oldest and the youngest civilizations, are soon to be thrown in contact. The improvements which have been gathering strength through successive ages, dynasties and revolutions, which have sprung from the discovered arcana of nature, and subjected even the elements to the common use of life as man's ministering agents, the developements of profound social, moral and political truths, all these will, ere many years pass, be brought into immediate proximity and striking contrast with the stationary forms of oriental civilization. All this is a simple, plain, matter-of-fact affair. The results almost appal the imagination, yet they are not only attainable, but by the simplest means.

It is for those who can look calmly and practically at the greatest enterprises, to co-operate in this undertaking. No petty jealousy of rival statesmen or paltry conflicts of interest should be permitted to intervene, to retard or reject the work. Those who are familiar with the history of great enterprises, know that they are often defeated by too much confidence in their intrinsic merits, and by the rivalries of personal ambition. To the valley of the Mississippi—aye, to the whole Union—this is now the greatest of public measures; and nothing should be omitted which research or argument can do in pushing it forward. St. Louis is especially interested, and should spare neither labor nor expense in ripening public opinion for its early adoption. It is too important a matter to be suffered to slumber whilst any thing remains to be done. Proper exertions can insure speedy Congressional action, and if a convention can contribute to that end, why not have one here as well as elsewhere.—*St. Louis Daily Union*, May 2, 1849.

Yesterday we presented a few general considerations on this subject, and to-day we wish to refer more particularly to the proposition of Mr. O'Reilly, as recently published. In his printed proposal for extending the telegraph, he alludes to his design of going westward to the Pacific. More than a year ago, in common with other editors in St. Louis, we endeavored to show the practicability and importance of so great an enterprise. Since then great events have occurred, demanding early action in the matter. The following extracts from Mr. O'Reilly's recent circular, develop his plan. They show that he is fully alive to the progress of the times:

If any persons are disposed to be incredulous on this subject, let them remember that, but a few years ago, the project of a lightning connexion between the Mississippi river and the Atlantic coast was pronounced "visionary and absurd;" that an official report from the Post Office Department treated electro-magnetic telegraphs as a failure, so far as their applicability to the business of the country was concerned. Since that report was made Mr. O'Reilly has put into successful operation 4,000 miles of telegraph, and

has under contract 4,000 miles more, (since completed,) a distance equal to the diameter of the globe, or as far as from London to San Francisco in a direct line. All this has been done by individual enterprise; and the various lines are actively employed in forwarding communications from one extreme of the Union to the other. When these facts are considered in connexion with the mode of constructing the line to the Pacific which Mr. O'Rielly suggests, it is not too much to say, that the plan is not only practicable, but combines many national advantages. The men who have already constructed lines for 4,000 (8,000) miles, camping for large portions of the time in the open air, can certainly carry this enterprise to the Pacific with but little difficulty. We have no doubt that as private stock it would pay handsome dividends, but its national importance will more than justify Congressional legislation and aid. It is in exact harmony with Col. Benton's policy, and the views of many of our wisest and most sagacious statesmen.

About a year ago we were in the city of Washington, when the President was urging on Congress the necessity of sending a force to Oregon for the protection of its white inhabitants against the hostile Indians. We accompanied Mr. O'Rielly to the President's, when he offered a battalion of men for that service. His purpose was to send forward a party of those men who had been long employed by him in the construction of his telegraphic lines, so that they might be at the Pacific section of the future route for a telegraph, ready to engage, at a proper time, in that great lightning enterprise. They were hardy, resolute, brave, moral, and energetic, would have made good soldiers and valuable settlers, and have been on the spot to aid in the building of a Pacific telegraph at the close of the Indian war. The occasion did not require their military services, in the opinion of the executive, and Mr. O'Rielly's patriotic offer was not accepted.

We mention this incident, merely to show that the plan now published by Mr. O'Rielly, has been fully matured by him.

The policy which has directed the repeated efforts for the organization of Nebraska Territory, is, that a pathway to the Pacific may be opened and settled, without Indian interference or obstructions to travel. As soon as that organization is accomplished, settlements will spring up at various points along the route for the accommodation of travellers, so that a journey to California and Oregon may be made without hardship or danger. The raising of the mounted riflemen looked to the same object. It has been a point with our statesmen for some time past, especially was it with Col. Benton and the late Dr. Linn, to encourage emigration to Oregon. The acquisition of California has given new force to the subject, and has aroused the public mind to the vast importance of prompt action. Hence the various projects for railroads to the Pacific.

We have stated that there need be no delay in the construction of a telegraph—indeed, that is the proper pioneer of the railroad. Col. Benton's plan looks to lightning as well as steam communication. Already, the government is expending large sums for carrying the mails to California; and the shortest time in which that can be done, under the present arrangements, is fifty-one days. Now, *if the ideas of Mr. O'Rielly are adopted, the mails can be taken through overland in twelve days, whilst there will be instant communication also by lightning.* The amount expended by the government in two years, under the present plan, will build the telegraph to San Francisco, establish the various intermediate stations, and

involve no additional expense whatever for keeping the whole system in constant operation.

This plan is briefly this: Distribute the mounted regiment, or whatever force is designated for duty on that route, in parties of twenty or twenty-five men, at stockades about thirty miles apart. Let two mounted men start from each stockade daily, and ride to the intermediate telegraph stations, half-way between the respective stockades. Those riders can take mails with them. Half-way between the stockades, the telegraph company will establish stations, at which the families of the operators, &c., will reside. Thus the distance for each dragoon to ride daily, will be only fifteen miles, if a daily mail is desired. Whilst making that short trip, they will furnish all the protection to the wires which they require—indeed, will give to this line more supervision than is now bestowed upon any telegraphic route in the Mississippi valley. A very simple computation will show that one regiment between Fort Leavenworth and the mountains, and another from San Francisco to meet it, thus distributed, will accomplish the whole object. These regiments have to be kept up now, and may be thus usefully employed. According to such an arrangement, they will be kept on light duty, and will give to travellers their guidance and protection. They will save to the government the whole expense of this mail service, remove it beyond all danger or doubt, and make the route to California as easy and comfortable as any in the United States.

It can be readily perceived that, by securing in this way regular stopping places for every fifteen miles of the immense distance, the emigrants will find the comforts of which they are now deprived, and meet with friends to cheer and provide for them. At those points, where water is not otherwise to be procured, wells will be sunk for the use of those residing there, and for the emigrants *en route*. Each station and stockade will probably be soon surrounded with gardens and corn-fields, and will furnish markets at which the Indians can sell their game.

In a newspaper article all the features of this *project* cannot be presented so fully as they deserve; nor can many of the arguments in its favor be even referred to. *Its practicability cannot be disputed.* The gentlemen *familiar with the route*, to whom it has been communicated, have promptly endorsed it, not as feasible alone, but as just the thing required. A little wise action at Washington next winter, will enable this design to be commenced in the following spring, and perfected in two years, at the farthest. Future travellers across the plains will go with ease and comfort. The emigrants will communicate promptly with their friends at home, both whilst on the route, and when they reach their far-off destination. The merchants of the east can send orders for their vessels in the Pacific, and the government direct its officers in California, New Mexico, and Oregon without delay. There will be no loss of mails, or detention for months. By letter, information can be sent in twelve days—by lightning, in an hour, or even less. The extremes will be knit firmly together, and a residence in or journey to the Pacific coast, will be shorn of all its terrors. We know of no plan for immediate communication with the Pacific, which presents so many advantages. At the close of each day's travel, emigrants can stop at a stockade or station, rest for the night among friends, and be ready to resume the next day's journey refreshed and invigorated. The nucleus of settlements will be formed along the whole route, so that Nebraska will be, in a short period, what it is designed to make it by its proposed organiza-

tion into a territory. From the main line to California, branches can be extended to New Mexico and Oregon, whenever thought advisable. The aid to emigrants which would be thus given whilst they are on the plains, would surpass all that government has done thus far, and at no more cost than at present. The saving in mail expenditures would more than meet the required outlay. As an economical measure, it commends itself to the government; and as the means of promoting the public policy with regard to California, Oregon, and New Mexico, it is invaluable. Why, then, can it not be undertaken promptly? Congress can pass the bill next session, and in less than two years there will be lightning communication hourly with the Pacific coast, and a regular mail running through in twelve days, beyond the reach of accidents by sea, or of enemies in war—all, too, at less cost than the present slow mode adopted.—*Ib.* May 3, 1849.

MR. O'RIELLY'S PLAN FOR EXTENDING TELEGRAPHIC AND MAIL FACILITIES TO THE PACIFIC.

The plan of Mr. O'Rielly for securing communication between the Atlantic and Pacific overlands, is thus stated in the *Union*: * * *

The plan here stated is one that has suggested itself to hundreds, since the question of establishing communications over the plains and mountains has become one of immediate interest. Such a portion of the army as would be required for the service mentioned, could not be more usefully employed. It was the Roman system, by which the republic conquered the world, to use the Roman soldier as a combatant in war, and a laborer and artizan in peace. When the soldier achieved the conquest by his sword, he secured it by the implements of his peaceful industry. He built towers, castles and fortifications; opened and constructed roads; and prepared the country for the reception of the cultivator, the mechanic and the merchant. Under our system, too little is required of the army in time of peace. Large bodies of it are too frequently sustained in idleness, and its officers and engineers grow rusty and unserviceable by long habits of inaction.

It is obvious to every man, that soldiers must be maintained on the line of the route across the plains and the mountains. Why not make them additionally serviceable—to an extent not easy to calculate—by requiring them to lay the foundations of the settlements, that may in no long time be made to checker the surface of a country now a wild, and, upon Mr. O'Rielly's plan, *to forward the mail and guard the telegraph?*

The plan is feasible, greatly more economical than any other conceivable plan of securing the proposed advantages, and falls in exactly with the idea of establishing a military force on the route. In fact, it is merely showing how the measures that the government must *necessarily* take for the protection of that route, can be made, *without one cent's additional expense*, IMMEASURABLY SERVICEABLE TO EVERY INTEREST BOTH OF THE GOVERNMENT AND THE PEOPLE.—*From the St. Louis Daily Organ, May 4, 1849.*

NOW FOR THE PACIFIC!

Mr. O'Rielly also states that he is ready to complete the whole line to the Pacific ocean, within twelve months after the passage of a Congressiona

bill for the purpose. Truly this is a *project* worthy of the age. A few days ago, we spoke of its immense importance to the government and people—the union of the Atlantic and Pacific by “links of lightning”—giving to the inhabitants along the American shores of the two great oceans, instant communication. The subject is worthy of Congressional attention.—*St. Louis Daily Union*, January 6, 1848.

MOVEMENT TOWARDS THE PACIFIC—INCREASED DEMAND FOR THE TELEGRAPH
—THE GREAT COMMERCIAL WONDER OF THE AGE—SETTLEMENTS ON THE
PACIFIC, &C.

The London Chronicle, reviewing the causes which have suddenly revolutionized the prospects of commerce and colonization on the shores of the Pacific ocean, mentions them as “the great commercial wonders of the age.” Referring particularly to “the mighty wave of immigration which is now rolling towards the western shores of the American continent,” the Chronicle remarks that “it is impossible to foretell the mighty influence which it will exert upon the future prosperity of commerce on that ocean.”

In connexion with this “mighty wave of immigration” (a large portion of which is now and will long continue rolling onward *via* St. Louis and the Missouri valley,) the London editor refers to the great importance of facilitating the intercourse and correspondence between the Atlantic and Pacific. “A railroad has been talked of, and will doubtless soon be commenced,” says the Chronicle. “Boston and St. Louis are already connected by a magnetic line—an extension of which is already contemplated to the Pacific coast. The expense of completing a line from St. Louis (or rather Fort Leavenworth) to the Pacific has been estimated at four hundred thousand dollars,” continues the London editor, “and we confidently believe that in our day and generation both undertakings will be accomplished.”

If our British friend were resident in St. Louis about these days, witnessing the trade and travel occasioned by the attractions of the Pacific coast, his faith in railroad and telegraphic improvements, strong as it appears to be, would be vastly quickened. The well-considered project of Senator Benton will unquestionably soon eventuate in the completion, as well as the commencement of a national railroad to California. The public mind, indicated by the general tone of the press throughout the United States, points with certainty to such a glorious result at no distant day.

The lightning line of correspondence is already arranged for construction beyond St. Louis as far westward as Fort Leavenworth—the principal towns of the Missouri valley having indicated their readiness to sustain Mr. O'Reilly in the plan proposed last year, when this paper, in common with other journals of the west, expressed concurrence in the importance of the enterprise—at a time, be it remembered, anterior to the discovery of the golden attractions which are now drawing multitudes of immigrants towards California. Even before California was acquired by treaty, and before its vast mineral riches were discovered, a telegraphic line to the Pacific was deemed advisable by many who had well considered the subject; and surely now, when we consider the immense impulse suddenly and

permanently given to colonization and commerce on the shores of that ocean, we cannot wonder that even a London editor has full faith of "seeing the enterprise accomplished in his day and generation." He will not probably grow many years older before his news department will teem with "the American steamer's news, including despatches from the Pacific, transmitted by lightning across the American continent."

The readers of the Republican will bear witness that its editorial department is not readily influenced by excitements concerning visionary projects. It belongs to the history of the time to record fuller particulars of one project—the telegraphic enterprise—to which allusion was made in the early part of last year, and to which reference is now again made, as one of the subjects most immediately interesting to all classes of our fellow-citizens throughout the Union; not only those who are now embarking for the "land of promise," but to those who remain at home. As this is probably the last paper that will reach the frontiers before the immigrants start thence upon their journey across the plains, and as they are now having peculiar opportunities for judging of the necessities and comforts of telegraphic communication, some extracts are hereto annexed from a circular showing the plans of Mr. O'Reilly for extending the telegraph to the Pacific ocean, if Congress renders reasonable assistance in carrying it across the public domain. Excluding such parts of the circular as refer merely to the details of business, the following portion may indicate the spirit with which the work will be prosecuted.

The circular is headed as follows: "Mississippi and Pacific telegraph—being the second division of the Atlantic and Pacific range." The following are the introductory remarks of Mr. O'Reilly, indicating the general plan, &c., &c.—*St. Louis Daily Republican, April 26, 1849.*

ATLANTIC AND PACIFIC TELEGRAPH.

The notion has not yet been abandoned entirely that railroads should necessarily precede telegraphs, although the extraordinary spread of the latter continues daily to demonstrate the fact, that they are the most independent means of communication yet devised by man—the easiest of construction, and the most available for profit, when once put in operation. Many still exclaim that we shall not have a wire communication with the Pacific until the railroad is first established, and perhaps the best plan will be to allow the wires themselves to silence such cavallers.

A wondrous change in sentiment, as well as in everything else, has taken place since (but eighteen months ago) the project of a Pacific telegraph was first broached in this paper. California was not then named in the connexion; for it had not passed into our hands, and there were enemies enough of all "mad schemes," without challenging the objectors to the war and the acquisition of territory to opposition. Eighteen months, and a world has been added to the area of freedom, peopled already with thousands and thousands of our citizens, to echo every call of enterprise and progress which may appeal to them from the Atlantic and from our own valley. We need not say that the telegraph extension will be at once popular in the valleys of the Sacramento and Wallamette. Senator Benton's

great work will summon the national energy and ambition into one useful channel, and as "vant courier" to the undertaking, the electric wire will be found flashing from point to point its promises of speedy fulfilment to the hopes of the most sanguine.

Mr. O'Reilly having completed the organization of his unparalleled lines east of the Mississippi, is now prepared forthwith to proceed westward, even beyond the bounds of our State. The work in fact is in hand, and the towns along the Missouri—aroused, as they have been this spring, by scenes which will be annually repeated through the future—have only to say how far and how promptly they will become interested in that which so peculiarly concerns them. Let us here submit to our readers an extract from the circular which Mr. O'Reilly is sending forth in connexion with this new work, &c.—*St. Louis Daily Reveille*, April 26, 1849.

C.

Atlantic and Pacific Telegraph.—Practicability of the project—advantages of the route, &c.—Opinion of a gentleman who has traversed the region he describes.

As the proceedings and calculations of the St. Louis national convention, already quoted, referred chiefly to a route from the western frontier of Missouri or Iowa to the Pacific, it may be well to give the views of one of those gentlemen who are more familiar with another route in a more southerly latitude. The ability with which the writer of the following letter has discussed various highly important national questions, (though anonymously published,) is well known to many of our prominent statesmen, as well as to the editors of some of our leading political journals :

WASHINGTON, February, 1852.

MY DEAR SIR : I have carefully and attentively read your memorial in relation to the construction of a line of telegraphs, diverging from different points on the "routes to be selected," to San Francisco, on the Pacific ; and I am well aware of the diversity of opinion which exists, in relation to the "routes to be selected," in the west, for the accomplishment of this great national project ; but I am satisfied that the diversity of opinion which exists in that quarter of the country, is of a sectional character. Every intelligent man with whom I have conversed unites heartily in the importance of the undertaking, in a NATIONAL POINT OF VIEW ; but their local prejudices and their private interests, in a great many instances, absorb their national feelings. These difficulties exist in no other part of the country. The importance of connecting our Pacific possessions with the Atlantic States, is a subject that should engage the attention of every statesman and every intelligent man in our common country—a country brought into national existence by the blood of our revolutionary fathers, and cemented together by social and political considerations worthy of perpetuation— which it should be the pride and boast of us all to protect and defend.

The age in which we live is called the "age of progress and improvement." So it is. But the question arises, to whom are we indebted for the advancement of our country in all that is great and noble ? To the

man of genius and enterprise, no matter in what department of industry that genius and enterprise are engaged. War has its horrors and disadvantages, but it is the great element of civilization. If it had not been for the war with Mexico, which was depicted with so much affected horror by false philanthropists during its prosecution, we would not this day have witnessed a city on the Pacific coast with a population of seventy thousand enterprising American freemen. There is a propelling power about the American character which is the wonder and admiration of the civilized world, and no obstacle—great or small—impedes its progress. It appears to me that it is our destiny, by our indomitable perseverance in the extension of our commerce—the element of a nation's wealth and the hand-maid of civilization—to revolutionize the world, *politically* and *socially*. By these means the condition of mankind will be ameliorated in every quarter of the globe; and the impetus thus given them will propel them onward in all that is *great* and *noble*, until they shall reach the apex of human happiness.

You know that I am a plain unpretending man, but little known to the large body of our countrymen; but, at the same time, I have always taken an active part in the discussion of every question that presents itself, if it is of a national character, and with which the *honor* and *prosperity* of our country are intimately associated.

Looking, then, to the vast importance, in a *military* as well as a *commercial* point of view, of a telegraphic line to the Pacific coast, with a *cordon* of military posts, equally distant, for the protection of the immigrant, I will candidly and freely give you my views in relation to what I consider the *best* and most *practicable* route for the construction of your proposed line, as well as for a railroad, *derived from practical observation*.

It is my candid opinion that the best and most practicable route for this great national highway, is to cross the Mississippi river at Memphis, Tennessee, thence in a westwardly direction to a point on the Arkansas river, opposite Little Rock, crossing the river at that point; thence along the mail road to Fort Smith, at the junction of the Poteaux, and on the south bank of the Arkansas; thence in a westwardly direction through the Choctaw country, crossing the north fork of the Canadian; thence in a westwardly direction through the Creek country, to Edwards's trading-house, on Little river, crossing that stream; thence westwardly to Choteau's old trading-house, on the margin of the great prairie; thence, in a south-westwardly direction to Albuquerque, on the Rio Grande—from which point a diverging line might be established to Santa Fe—thence down the margin of the Rio Grande, diverging until you reach the Gila, following the banks of that river until you reach the Rio Colorado at or near Los Angelos, where it empties into the Gulf of California; thence, crossing the Rio Colorado, westwardly to the Pacific.

The natural advantages of this route (nearly all of which I have personally examined) over that of a more northern one, for the construction of either a telegraph or railroad, are, indeed, *very great*, to my mind.

In the first place, you *avoid the Rocky mountains and Sierra Nevada*, because you are *southeast of them*. The country is level, and the water-courses abound with timber adapted to such purposes.

In the second place—which is of vast importance—you *avoid the hard winters of a more northwardly route*, the *deep snows* of which would be great obstacles to the construction of these works and the transportation of letter-mails.

In the third place, you would be able to work nearly the whole year on this route, while, on the more northern one, you would be impeded by the severity of the winters.

I have thus stated to you frankly my opinions upon this subject ; and I sincerely wish you every success in such a noble and grand enterprise, the accomplishment of which will redound to the honor of American genius and enterprise—the true elements of our national prosperity—and thus make our country the greatest commercial nation of the earth.

By the establishment of a line of steamers from San Francisco to Canton, and the telegraph line connected from the Atlantic to the Pacific, *New York will be within twenty-eight days' news of China.*

When this shall be accomplished, and the Pacific railroad completed, the commercial supremacy of the world will belong to us ; and, instead of getting our tea from England by the way of the Cape of Good Hope, or in American vessels by the way of Cape Horn, England will get her tea direct from New York.

These are the fruits of American genius and enterprise, which should not be looked upon with indifference, but should be pressed onward to a glorious consummation.

Your friend and fellow-citizen,

E. B. ROBINSON.

HENRY O'RIELLY, Esq.

SOME OPINIONS OF PUBLIC MEN.

As these pages were going to press, the memorialist received some letters from Washington, copies of two of which may be annexed, expressive of the general views of all the writers ; one of the writers of the subjoined letters being a member of Congress, and the other occupying one of the most prominent public stations in the Union :

[From a distinguished public functionary.]

“WASHINGTON, *February 19, 1852.*

“DEAR SIR : I have your letter of the 12th, (which enclosed a memorial,) and have perused it with pleasure, as I take a deep interest in any project calculated to facilitate the intercommunication between the Atlantic and the Pacific States.

“If we cannot bind those States to us by roads, railroads and telegraph lines, we may soon see them setting up for independence.

“The ‘home tie’ which binds the Californian to his native State on the Atlantic, will grow weaker every day ; and a new generation will soon arise that know not the east, and then the only bond of union will be a common country, and a common glory, and a common interest, that can only be equalled by a free and uninterrupted communication from the seat of government to every part of this wide-spread republic.

“I shall be happy to receive a copy of that part of the report of the St. Louis national convention to which you refer, and after I have had time to

peruse it, it will give me pleasure to receive from you any verbal explanations which you may be pleased to give.

"I am, your obedient servant,

"_____.

"HENRY O'REILLY, Esq."

[From a member of Congress.]

"WASHINGTON, *February* 16, 1852.

"DEAR SIR: Your letter and memorial, presenting a proposition and plan for telegraphic and letter mail communication with the Pacific is received. The plan seems to have been well considered, and to be complete in the measures proposed to accomplish the purpose.

"You request criticism, that, if any objections exist, you may obviate them if possible. I do not see any important change of your plan that could be made, and yet leave it efficient for its object. The difficulty is to obtain the attention and action of Congress upon it.

"Yours, truly,

"_____.

"TO HENRY O'REILLY, Esq."